Military Research: War of 1812

In the War of 1812, the United States took on the greatest naval power in the world, Great Britain, in a conflict that would have an immense impact on the young country's future. Causes of the war included British attempts to restrict U.S. trade, the Royal Navy's impressment of American seamen and America's desire to expand its territory. The United States suffered many costly defeats at the hands of British, Canadian and Native American troops over the course of the War of 1812, including the capture and burning of the nation's capital, Washington, D.C., in August 1814. Nonetheless, American troops were able to repulse British invasions in New York, Baltimore and New Orleans, boosting national confidence and fostering a new spirit of patriotism. The ratification of the Treaty of Ghent on February 17, 1815, ended the war but left many of the most contentious questions unresolved. Nonetheless, many in the United States celebrated the War of 1812 as a "second war of independence," beginning an era of partisan agreement and national pride.

The War of 1812 produced a new generation of great American generals, including Andrew Jackson, Jacob Brown and Winfield Scott, and helped propel no fewer than four men to the presidency: Jackson, John Quincy Adams, James Monroe and William Henry Harrison.

A Guide to the War of 1812

The digital collections of the Library of Congress contain a wide variety of material associated with the War of 1812, including manuscripts, broadsides, pictures, and government documents. This guide compiles links to digital materials related to the War of 1812 that are available throughout the Library of Congress Web site. https://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/1812/

PBS.org: The War of 1812

The Essays apparently have been pulled. But the video of the war of 1812 is here: https://www.pbs.org/video/wned-tv-history-war-1812/

~~British Perspective~~

The War of 1812 has been referred to as a victorious "Second War for Independence," and used to define Canadian identity, but the British only remember 1812 as the year Napoleon marched to Moscow. ~~http://www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812/essays/british-perspective/~~

~~American Perspective~~

The War of 1812 is probably our most obscure conflict. Although a great deal has been written about the war, the average American is only vaguely aware of why we fought or who the enemy was. ~~http://www.pbs.org/wned/war-of-1812/essays/american-perspective/~~

Ancestry Academy: War of 1812 Lectures ~~(Approximately one hour in length –~~ FREE)

https://www.ancestryacademy.com/ancestors-family-and-associates-in-the-war-of-1812-records

~~https://www.ancestry.com/academy/course/war-of-1812?ref=searchbar~~

A Century of Lawmaking for a New Nation
US Congressional Documents and Debates

The mission of the Library of Congress is to make its resources available and useful to Congress and the American people and to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for future generations. The Library of Congress does not endorse the views expressed in these collections, which may contain materials offensive to some readers.
https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/amlaw/

Search for an Ancestor through the: **House Journal** (full text), **Senate Journal** (full text), and **Statutes at Large**. Use quotes to encapsulate the full name i.e. "John Smith". Look for House Reports that might be attached to a bill (might also be found in Google Books, Ancestry or other subscriptions outside the web site).

A Partial List of Records created by the War of 1812

Naval Records	Pension Records	Prisoner of War Records
Regular Army Records	Civilian Private Claims	Discharge Papers
Bounty and Applications	Congressional Appeals	Compiled Military Service Records (CMSR)
Bounty-Land Warrants	Lineage Societies	State Muster Rolls & Payrolls
Bounty-Land Patents and Tract Book Entries	National Battlefield Parks	

Records at the National Archives (NARA)

Records of the Adjutant General's Office (**RG 94**)
Records of the Veteran's Administration (**RG 15**)
Naval Records Collection (**RG 45**)
Records of the U.S. Marine Corps (**RG 127**)
Records of the General Land Office (**RG 49**) (Bounty Land Warrants)
Records of the Department of State (**RG 59**)
Records of the House of Representatives (**RG 233**)

Pension Indexes:

Pensions
- **Fold3** – ~~https://www.fold3.com/browse/247/~~
  https://www.fold3.com/browse/h1Tev3Z8s
- **Ancestry** – Search on "War of 1812" in the Card Catalogue
- **FamilySearch** – https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1916219

Old War Pension Index (wars before 1861)
- **FamilySearch** - https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1979425

Remarried Widows Index (Check soldiers, and widows maiden and/or married names)
- **FamilySearch** - https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1979426

Naval and Marine Service Records

The abstracts of Service Records of Naval (and Marine Corps) Officers ("Records of Officers"), 1798-1893 can be found at the National Archives (**M330**, 19 rolls, Records of the Bureau of Naval Personnel RG24, volumes D and E).

Records of the US Marine Corps (**RG 127**) include comprehensive card indexes for all officers and enlisted men serving before 1900

The best sources for ascertaining naval service in both the Navy and Marine Corps are the pension and bounty land application files. The ship's name and dates of service will be indicated on the application.

Records to be found in the Pensions (think of evidence provided)

Birth date and place	Bounty land papers
Bible pages	Military service details
Wife's maiden name	Discharge certificate
Marriage date and place	Historical images, photographs
Other spouses	Death date and place
Names of Children	Names of Parents
Decades of residence	Physical description

Family Search US Navy: https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/U.S._Navy

Bounty-Land Records

Acts of 1850 and **1855** allowed veterans to apply for Bounty-Land Warrants

Act of 1850: 9 Mo. Service (160 Acres), 4 Mo. Service (80 Acres), 1 Mo. Service (40 Acres)

Act of 1855: Minimum award = 160 Acres, Required 14 days service or travel of 1,200 miles. Soldiers could re-apply for the balance owed if they were awarded under the Act of 1850. Assignable to a third party (Act of 1850 prohibited transfer except to Widow or Inheritance)

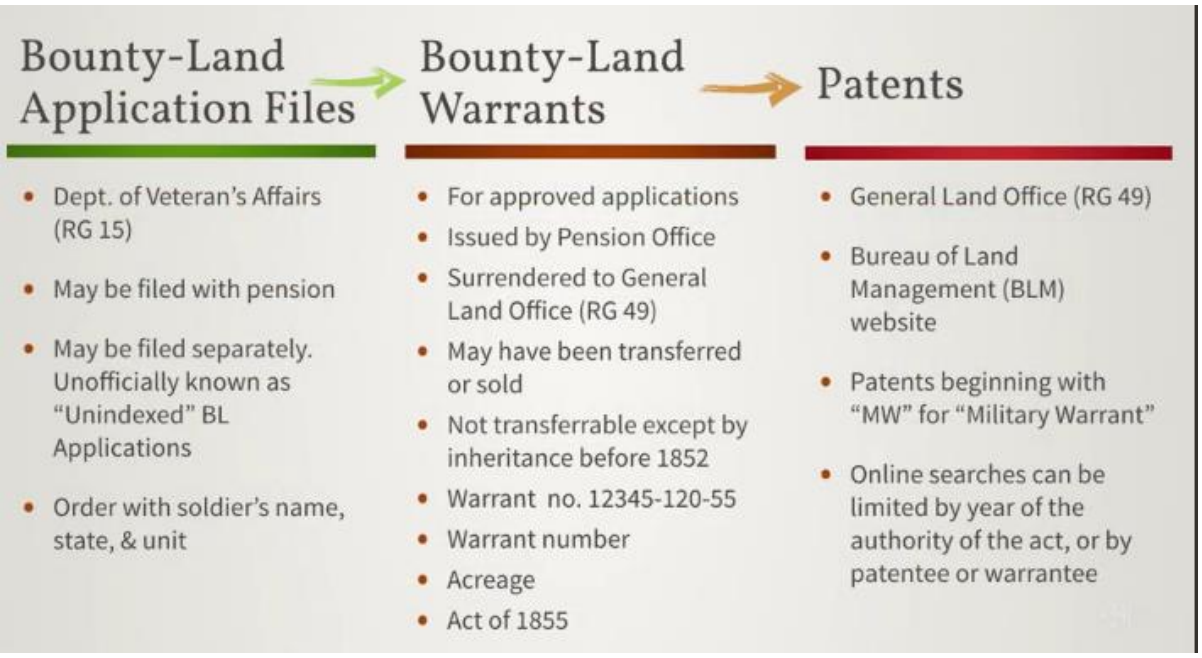
Bounty-Land Patent Records are online at Bureau of Land Management (http://glorecords.blm.gov/search/)

Patent numbers are different from Warrant numbers (look for "MW" for Military Warrant)

Example: **MW-0110-363** verses **IL0540__.142**

For the Military Warrant, go to the BLM Search feature and select the "Search Documents by Identifier". Under "Patent Identifiers" you want to select "Accession #" and click on the pull down menu where it may say "Serial Patent". From the pull down list, select "Military Warrant". You should see to the right of the list a text box with "MW" as the prefix. Enter the identifier "0110-363" shown above. Click on the Search button. Results should show the documents for the Military Warrant.

For the other example: IL0540__.142 much like the military warrant, follow the instructions under "Search Documents by Identifier" and select "Accession #". Then select the "Serial Patent" and from the pull down list, select "State Volume". To the right then enter in the text box "IL0540__.142" and push the search button at the bottom of the page. The result should be the documents from the State where the land was registered.



State Militias

State Archives have a large set of collections (https://www.statearchivists.org/research-resources/resource-center)

Not all records are online. Some cities maintain their own records like Philadelphia or Baltimore. State Pensions are offered in a few states.

Prisoner of War records might be contained in the Pension files. In the War of 1812, Prisoners were treated under International Law with limited rights unlike the Revolutionary War where prisoners were treated as criminals or traitors.

Prisoner Collections in the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA)

M508 contains "War of 1812 Papers of the Department of State, 1789-1815". Includes information on British and U.S. Prisoners of war and prisoner exchanges (7 reels of microfilm)

M2019 contains "Records Relating to War of 1812 Prisoners of War". Lists of clothing delivered to U.S. Prisoners in Canada with some details of paroles and deserters (1 reel)

M1707 contains "Index to Records Relating to War of 1812 Prisoners of War". Index to M2019: soldiers name; rank; occasionally a regiment number; reference

Ancestry.com contains "War of 1812" records and "UK, Prison Hulk Registers and Letter Books, 1802-1849", a collection of records about the number of prisoners held on prison ships during the War of 1812.

Native American and African-American Service and Records

Native Americans fought on both sides hoping to stem encroachment onto their lands.

African-Americans served in the US Navy (abt. 15%) and had a reputation for fierceness in battle. While on board sip, African-Americans sailors often received the same pay, quarters, rations, duties, discipline, and punishment as white Sailors.

British attempted to recruit African-American slaves by offering freedom, with little success.

Where these records might be found:

Index to Compiled Service Records of Volunteer Soldiers Who Served During the War of 1812 (**M602**)

Major Uriah Blue's Detachment of Chickasaw Indians (**M1829**)

Major McIntosh's Company of Creek Indians (**M1830**)

Discharge Certificates and Miscellaneous Records Relating to Discharge of Soldiers from the Regular Army, 1792-1815 (**M1856**)

War of 1812 discharge certificates (**RG 94**)

Pension Records for Native American and African-American Service can be found in any of the records previously listed.

There is no distinction for Native American and African-Americans in the pension files. Look to the state where the tribe and/or the serviceman served.

Oneida and Seneca Tribes: New York; Cherokee: North Carolina, Georgia, and Alabama; Creek: Georgia

On **Fold3**: Search for veterans English name first (if known), then their Native American name.

African-Americans can be found in any of the states but most likely in Maryland, New York, Pennsylvania, and Louisiana. (Also look in the US Navy and Marine Corps files)

Native American and African-Americans had to go through extra paperwork to obtain a pension, if granted.

On **Fold3**, use the **Browse** function at the top of the menu to list the Category you wish to search.

The Other Side – British and Canadian Soldiers

Canadian Archives: http://www.bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/Pages/home.aspx

The 200th anniversary of the War of 1812 is a unique opportunity for all Canadians to take pride in our traditions, and our shared history. The Government of Canada recognizes the War of 1812 as a defining moment in the history of our nation and has big plans to commemorate this event of national and international significance. This commemoration is just one of the many events that are bringing Canadians together and will continue to link us in the years to come.

https://www.canada.ca/en/library-archives/search.html?q=War%20of%201812

The War of 1812 between Great Britain and the United States confirmed the separate existence of the United States and the future Canada. It formally began on June 18, 1812. To end the war, the treaty of Ghent was signed 24 December 1814. However another battle was fought 8 January 1815 at New Orleans. https://www.familysearch.org/wiki/en/Great_Britain_in_the_War_of_1812

The War of 1812: from the British Side: http://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/the-war-of-1812-from-the-british-side/

Forces War Records ($$) – Free Search https://www.forces-war-records.co.uk